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such suggestions as I may deem proper in the premises touching on the merits of the bill and the propriety of its passage.

With regard to this bill, authorizing the Surgeon-General of the Marine-Hospital Service to cause an investigation to be made relative to the origin and prevalence of leprosy in the United States, I have to state that in view of the fact that leprosy is known to exist in quite a number of places in this country there is a prevailing opinion among the sanitary authorities that there are many more of these cases than have been recorded. Moreover, there has been a confusion of ideas about the danger of its spread. In one locality the disease is reported to be slowly spreading, and each year there are noted fresh foci of the disease, while, on the other hand, the reported isolated cases are a subject of discussion as to whether they are a menace.

So far there has been no systematic inquiry made with regard to the origin and prevalence of the disease in the United States. Some valuable reports have been made of the prevalence and behavior of this disease in one or two localities. Further than this the information is imperfect and fragmentary.

That the disease is contagious no one at present will deny. The International Leprosy Conference, which met in Berlin in October last, declared that the disease is not only contagious, but when introduced into a country the history shows that it invariably spreads, each case forming a nidus of infection, and sooner or later other cases followed. This fact has been recognized by a few of the State and local authorities where there was a considerable number of cases, and restrictive measures are now enforced to prevent its further spread. In many places from which isolated cases have been reported no such measures have been generally practiced. The Marine-Hospital Service has been notified of the existence of such cases and has been requested to assume charge of them, and when it was ascertained that there was no law for such procedure these cases have been turned adrift to go wherever they pleased.

In this connection I would state that it is believed that there are many more cases of leprosy in the United States than are actually known. Recent investigation and study of the disease have demonstrated that there are quite a number of obscure forms of nervous and skin diseases which heretofore considered as separate and distinct are nothing more or less than leprosy.

Before any rational measures can be undertaken by the National Government, if such a conclusion is justifiable, it will be necessary to inquire further into the origin and prevalence of the disease, and to determine just how far it is a menace to our people.

The expenses of such inquiry would be small; a sum sufficient to meet the expenses of travel of the officers detailed to this duty would be all that is required. This could be properly paid from the fund for the prevention of epidemic diseases.

The bill meets with approval, and I would respectfully recommend that favorable action be taken thereon.

Respectfully, yours,

WALTER WYMAN,
Supervising Surgeon-General Marine-Hospital Service.

Approved:

L. J. GAGE, *Secretary.*

Your committee recommends the passage of the bill.

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

PORTO RICO.

Report of inspection of Arecibo.

SAN JUAN, PORTO RICO, *February 16, 1899.*

SIR: I have the honor to make the following report of an inspection of Arecibo, Porto Rico.

This port is situated 36 miles by water, and about 50 miles by rail, west of San Juan, upon an open arm of the sea, which affords no protection to vessels in case of storms.

The population of the city is given at 9,000, and the district 26,000. The usual cistern and cesspool system prevails, and the place compares favorably in appearance with our own Gulf port towns. Vessels anchor in the open roadstead, and passengers and cargoes are lightered

ashore in a roundabout way up the Rio Grande or Santiago River, a small stream with numerous bars. The usual Spanish records are carefully and systematically kept, so far as appearances go. From the local non-English speaking collector of customs, the following shipping data were obtained:

Number of vessels arrived in the calendar years 1893, 59; 1894, 62; 1895, 27; 1896, 86; 1897, 88; 1898, 54.

The majority of these vessels are first inspected at the capital, San Juan, and those coming direct are from our northern ports, with salt cod, etc., returning with coffee and sugar to the ports of Boston and New York. Arecibo, therefore, from the water side, may be considered safe, in a sanitary point of view.

Dr. Fernando Aleman, 41 years of age, born in Matanzas, Cuba, has been port physician for the past six years. He speaks no English, and receives a salary of 21 pesos a month, which he considers too small for the little duty performed.

In the months of August and September, 1893, there were 20 cases of yellow fever and 10 deaths, confined to the new Spanish residents of a year or so. The local opinion is that this disease prevails endemically when new material is present. A fact, however, which they overlooked, and which I pointed out, was that this disease existed in San Juan the same year; the local French railroad was completed and placed in operation between the two places the year before, and may have been the carrier of the infection. A case or two of smallpox was discovered in the district lately; isolation practiced, with no further spread. The headquarters of the Sixth Immune United States Infantry is located here with companies stationed at near by points. I was told by their medical officers that out of 200 vaccinations made not one afforded protection. This vaccine virus is supplied from New York, and there is something at fault in its preparation or care. The Sixth Immune Volunteer Infantry is now being embarked on board the transport steamer *Chester* for mustering out at Savannah, Ga. Through the courtesy of Colonel Tyson, I obtained the following vital statistics in the local court:

The total number of deaths (de defuncion) for the calendar years were as follows: 1893, 887; 1894, 965; 1895, 871; 1896, 962; 1897, 969; 1898, 1,269. These figures were ascertained by making the additions, a matter of wonder and curiosity to the local officials. There appeared to be no special prevalence of contagious or infectious disease, the death rate in the yellow fever year, 1893, being no greater, but last year considerably higher than usual. Taking the average number of deaths for the five years, and their own estimate of 26,000 population to the district, the average death rate is 45.7 per thousand.

Like other cities and districts upon this island, a space of a few weeks is allowed in which to make the reports of births. For this reason many stillbirths are not recorded, and possibly others dying within the first week or two.

The record of births (nacimientos) is as follows: Year 1893, 1,116; 1894, 1,034; 1895, 1,069; 1896, 1,131; 1897, 1,087; 1898, 847. The number of births appears to have decreased, and the number of deaths increased during the year of the war, for no explainable reason.

I inclose a copy of the bill of health which I found in use here, also copies of the permanent birth and death records.

Respectfully submitted,

A. H. GLENNAN,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SUPERVISING SURGEON GENERAL.
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

[Inclosure No. 1.]

ARCEIBO, PORTO RICO.

To all to whom these presents shall come :

Whereas, the _____, of _____, of which _____ is master, is now ready to depart from the port of Arceibo _____, and other places beyond the sea, with _____ persons, including the master of the said vessel :

We, therefore, by these presents, do make known and certify that no plague, nor any other dangerous or contagious disease, in an epidemic form, at present exists in the said port.

Given under our hand and seal of office, this _____ day of _____, 189 .

FERNANDO ALEMAN,
Sanitary Physician of the Port.

_____, Deputy Collector of Customs.

Measles, cerebro-spinal meningitis, and la grippe in Mobile, Ala.

MOBILE, ALA., March 3, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to state that measles was brought to this town by the volunteers in June, and has prevailed more or less since; the disease has gone all over the city. Last week a death was reported as caused by pneumonia following an attack of measles. It is probable that other deaths primarily due to measles have been recorded under the final cause of death.

There have been 3 deaths from cerebro-spinal meningitis within the past week, 2 of them reported under other names (I witnessed a necropsy on the third case). There are other cases. No common cause except inclement weather is known.

The disease prevails in Lauderdale County, Ala., and there have been several fatal cases.

During the past month 4 death reports with la grippe solo, or as a complication, have been reported. Some physicians claim to have treated the disease, while others say they have not seen it. The disease has not been very prevalent, if it has existed here.

Respectfully, yours,

R. D. MURRAY,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

Smallpox in the United States.

ALABAMA.

Mobile.—Surgeon Murray reports, March 3, 1 case of smallpox sent to the pesthouse on February 25. He came from Clarke County. Several cases were reported from Hinds County, Miss.

CALIFORNIA.

LOS ANGELES, CAL., March 2, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to report that the first case of smallpox which occurred in this city for many months was a case of varioloid in September, 1898; the source of infection in this case is supposed to have been New Mexico. The second case reported was in a tourist from New Mexico, on November 26, 1898, and the third case in the person of the wife of the attending physician upon the tourist. On December 27, 1898, the fourth case of smallpox was reported existing in the extreme southern limits of the city, the source of infection supposed to have been tramps from Arizona. This case was quarantined at the patient's residence. On January 16, 1899, a case was reported to the office which